

# PATHWAYS

“SHOW ME YOUR WAYS, LORD, TEACH ME YOUR PATHS.” PSALM 25:4

HCA’s vision is to inspire students to love learning and live lives worthy of the calling of Christ.

## UPCOMING CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

**Oct. 9** - NO SCHOOL  
Columbus Day

**Oct. 11** - Lifetouch Picture  
Day (see page 3 for details)

**Oct. 13** - Trike-A-Thon  
(PK&K)

**Oct. 16-20** - Spiritual  
Emphasis Week; donations  
may be made [here](#)!

**Oct. 27** - NO SCHOOL -  
Term 2 Development Day

**Oct. 31** - Mystic Aquarium  
Field Trip, K-4

**Nov. 9** - Term 1 ends;  
Lifetouch Picture Re-take  
Day; Veterans’ Day ceremony,  
1pm

**Nov. 10** - NO SCHOOL  
Veterans’ Day Observed



## PRINCIPAL’S CORNER

Welcome to a new school year at HCA! We are excited to dive into our Year 2 Theme with students, “An Unchanging God in a Changing World.” As our students study our nation’s history from Reconstruction through present day, and God’s Word from Joshua through the end of the Old Testament, it will not take long to affirm that our world is ever changing. Even at their young ages, they have an awareness of constant changes in their own lives. So much change can be destabilizing because it reminds us how little control we have over the world and even our own lives. Yet, God the creator never changes.

(Continue reading on page 2....)

However, God's unchanging nature is only good if His characteristics and attributes are good. If God is unmerciful and unjust, trusting Him with our lives becomes extremely difficult. This brings us to the all important study of who God is. Only once we truly know Him can we know what to expect from Him and trust Him with our lives. This is the matter of utmost importance in our teaching here at HCA. As your students study God's Word and history, they will be reflecting on what they can learn about God by what He says and what He does. Time and again, God provides evidence that He is ever faithful, all-powerful, and just. It is not always easy to understand what God is doing from our human perspective, but we know from Biblical history that He is omniscient and sovereign. Please join us this year in our study of the attributes of God. Ask your students if they are able to see God's character through the stories they are reading in the Bible. Jeremiah 29:13 reminds us that, "*You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.*" I am excited for what we will discover as we seek Him together this year!

By His Grace,  
Mrs. Nikki Cleveland, Principal

Honoring God through  
Creative learning and strong  
Academics in a caring, fun-filled school!

### *A note about the After School Program!*

Due to the recent increase in popularity of our After School program, and the reality that we are still looking for a program coordinator, we are asking that all reservations be made by 1pm each day. After 1pm, the ASP program will be closed for new sign ups. Thank you for your understanding!

## Our annual Trike-a-Thon, Friday 10/13

Our Kindergarteners and Preschoolers will be pedaling their hearts out during our annual Trike-a-thon from 9:30-10:30am. Come cheer us on! Friends and family members sponsor our students to reach their goal of riding their bikes, trikes and scooters for 30 min. It is part of our Food for Life program!

If you are reading this as a relative, alumni or friend of HCA, you are welcome to support HCA's Trike-a-Thon too! It is easy to [make a donation online](#) through our HCA website. We look forward to sharing lots of pictures with you of this fun day! We thank God for our school and for all who support HCA!

## SAY CHEESE.....

Lifetouch Picture Day is coming to HCA!

**Picture Day is scheduled for next Wednesday, Oct. 11th.**

Our 2-day Thursday/Friday Preschool students may come to have their photo taken at 8:30am, or wait until re-take day on Thursday, Nov. 9th.

**Please take note: Picture Day order forms were sent home this week!!!!!!**

**All staff and students will be photographed for IDs and class pictures, even if you are not buying a package.**



# PLEASE TAKE NOTE...



## CALLING ALL VETERANS!

On Thursday, November 9th, we invite all parents/grandparents who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces to be our honored guests for a special luncheon at 12pm and a schoolwide Veterans' Day ceremony at 1pm. Please contact Mrs. Heenan, [kheenan@holdenchristianacademy.org](mailto:kheenan@holdenchristianacademy.org) if you would like to participate (or for more information). Historically we have asked our veterans to sit on a panel and answer questions as part of their learning experience. We hope you will join us!







# Greetings from Mrs. Heenan!

Welcome to the 2023-2024 school year! It has been an outstanding start to the school year, with children settling into school quickly, reuniting with friends, building new friendships, and continuing their learning.

Our (SEL) Social Emotional Learning program kicked off into high gear in elementary school, which made us do a lot of thinking. Each student worked on an “All About Me” project and a “What I did over the Summer” activity. In Middle School, we completed a questionnaire that asked the students a bunch of questions about how they see the world around them. It opened up a great discussion, and were shocked to hear how their teachers would have answered the questions when they were a student! The questionnaire asked about favorite things, famous people, what is popular, about friends, class, and what items cost. My hope is that when they are adults they take a look back at this and smile!

In grades Preschool - Grade 5, we will continue to use the Zones of Regulation Curriculum and add to our SEL binder new and thought-provoking activities. *“Zones of Regulation is an approach used to support the development of self-regulation in children. All the different ways children feel, and the states of alertness they experience, are categorized into four colored zones. Children who are well-regulated are able to be in the appropriate zone at the appropriate time.”* More information can be found at: <https://www.zonesofregulation.com/learn-more-about-the-zones.html>

Grades 6, 7, and 8 will be working on mindfulness-guided journaling. They were each gifted a journal through a donation. The students in Grade 7 received a copy of The Big Life Journal for Kids. In grade 8, students received the more mature edition, The Big Life Journal. In grade 6, we will be using the Big Life Journal Daily Journal for Kids. These journals are kept private unless they want to share their thoughts after completing a lesson. More information about these can be found at: <https://biglifejournal.com/> The students in the past have liked filling these out, and have enjoyed searching for scripture that corresponds with each lesson.

If you have any questions about Special Education or Social Emotional Learning please do not hesitate to reach out. [kheenan@holdenchristianacademy.org](mailto:kheenan@holdenchristianacademy.org)

-Mrs. Heenan, Special Needs Coordinator





# Preschool News!

## Upcoming Dates to Remember:

**Monday, 10/9:**  
NO SCHOOL

**Thursday, 10/11:**  
LIFETOUCH PICTURE DAY (2-day students may choose to come for a photo at 8:30am or wait until Re-take Day on Thursday, 11/9

**Friday, 10/13:**  
TRIKE- A- THON!

**Friday, 10/27 -**  
NO SCHOOL

HCA Preschool has had a wonderful beginning this year! The children have been adapting well to our school routines and come in each day ready to learn through all the playing we do! It is evident that they are growing in their awareness of others around them, in their own self-help skills, and in their independence in the classroom setting. What a gift as teachers it is to see them helping classmates, taking turns, and praising God through songs and activities!

Fall is quite the reminder for Preschoolers to learn about God's beauty in creation, through the changing colors of the leaves; the life cycle of the apple, from seed to tree to blossom to apple; the changes in temperature from chilly mornings and nights, to warm days while we are outside playing; and to noticing how squirrels begin to store away their food for winter. Children are also reminded often of how much God loves them and has created them in such beautiful, unique ways.

We spend much of our time identifying colors and shapes in our environments (both indoors and out!), and we hunt for letters and numbers in our class throughout the day and in engaging Circle Time activities. A big hit this first month of school has been our housekeeping Dramatic Play area, where you can find children building a home office, caring for the baby dolls, washing and ironing the laundry, and cooking dinner!

As our seasons change, we look forward to seeing how our Preschoolers change and grow, as God works in their young hearts and in our classroom family.

# Team A News!

## Kindergarten Update from Mrs. Coombs:

Welcome Kindergarten families! Your little ones are o"fish"ally in Kindergarten now. The transition from Preschool to Kindergarten can often be a challenge, but we have found ways to incorporate fun with learning to keep everyone engaged throughout each day. We have taken time to go over classroom expectations and classroom routines in the past month. The students have enjoyed being able to play in our Kindergarten classroom and have found little ways to make the room truly their own. We have been enjoying the beautiful fall weather God has given and have maximized every opportunity to play and learn outside.



Kindergarten jumped right into Science this term. We are studying the oceans, and learned a short song to help us remember the five oceans of the world. Ask your child to sing you the song! We have also taken a deep dive into the zones of the ocean and even created them in a glass jar so they could visually see the layers. We will continue to look at each zone more closely and learn about the different animals that live in each one. We learned about tide pools last week and the students loved exploring the pool we created together in the classroom. Best of all, we will end our Science unit by taking a field trip to Mystic Aquarium on Tuesday, October 31st. We can't wait!

Mmmmmm, the smell of apples filled the air as we made homemade applesauce in the classroom. We learned about the life cycle of the apple tree and the parts of the apple. We even joined together with First and Second Grade to determine which color apple Team A liked the best; red or green. The hands down winner was....insert drum roll... RED! We ended our apple unit with our own little "applefest" by watching a video on one of our friends from the past, Johnny Applesseed. The students enjoyed all the apple fun they experienced that day!

Kindergarten has started working on letter sounds as well as how to form lowercase letters. Each week a packet is sent home with information about the current lowercase letters and letter sounds that we are learning that week. This is a great opportunity for your child to show you what they are learning in class and have you assist them in practicing their sounds and letters.

Ms Rose and I are blessed to see each child grow in their own way as the students have begun to settle into a Kindergarten routine and we look forward to seeing what the year holds for our students! God bless!



### **Grade 1 Update from Mrs. Shand:**

First grade has been off to a strong start! We have been getting to know each other, mastering routines both inside and outside of the classroom, and keeping our HCA rules close to our heart. Most of all, the love of learning has been contagious and has set a wonderful tone for our first grade year!

Students have reviewed and studied the books of the Bible and listened to stories from Creation-Moses. Students have practiced their sounds, letter formation, and learned our test-taking routine in FUNdations. We have also taken our first unit test in Math, focusing on addition and subtraction strategies. In Social Studies, we have kicked off by learning about our continents and oceans. We have also “put ourselves on the map” by finding our continent, country, state, and our very own town! Our little historians have also started a list of “Friends from the Past” where we look at important people that have impacted our world like Johnny Appleseed and Laura Ingalls Wilder. We have been enjoying learning about our ocean & ocean animals more closely in Science. We are very excited for our trip to the aquarium soon.

Coming up next! Students will be using The Beginner’s Bible to look at stories from Joshua to Ruth. In FUNdations, we will blend and segment sounds within a word, learn “trick” words, and understand the structure of sentences. In Math, students will continue to explain strategies they use to solve addition/subtraction problems and understand fluency when solving these types of problems. Our next set of “Friends from the Past” will be Andrew Carnegie and PT Barnum. In Science, we will continue our study but dig deeper (literally-the deep ocean!). In Food For Life, we will continue to learn about healthy options for food intake and how to take care of our bodies physically. I am excited to see these students continue to flourish!

### **Grade 2 Update from Mrs. McGrail:**

Greetings from second grade ! Second graders have been transitioning into their new classroom, adapting to the new schedule, and understanding the meaning of leadership in their new roles as the “Team A Leaders.” In the Bible, we have been working on memorizing the 39 books of the Old Testament. Our class thoroughly enjoyed the Jesus StoryBook Bible stories of the birth, journey and life of Moses, and the warrior leader Joshua. We are currently creating a special book for our Peacebuilders Pledge (can’t wait to share with the school and families!). For the second half of the term, we will be digging into stories about fearless leaders such as Deborah, the story of strength of Samson, as well as Ruth, Samuel, and Saul.

In Math we have completed our Unit 1 test, and are making progress in completing Unit 2 in the next week or so. Our pause from Unit 2 to focus on number writing and double facts has been very beneficial. We are rapping doubles, using flashcards, and taking timed doubles pop-quizzes. Once we are past double fact mastery and completion of Unit 2, we will move on to Units 3 and 4 which will focus on addition to 100 strategies as well as fluently adding within 100.

FUNdations Unit 2 will wrap up this week and the remainder of Term 1 will have units 3 and 4 which will focus on closed syllable exceptions and suffixes. Second graders have enjoyed seeing Mrs. Lucier on Tuesdays and Thursdays when she joins us- they even blessed her for her birthday last week by making her beautiful cards and singing Happy Birthday when she walked in!

For the remainder of the term in History and Science, we continue learning about Friends of the Past as well as continuing our learning of the layers of the oceans and volcanoes.

We have lots of fun to look forward to this year- including our first field trip to Mystic Aquarium on 10/31! It’s going to be a great year. ☺



# Team B News!

## FROM MS. RENNIE'S DESK:

It was so nice to connect with you at Parent's Night. Thank you for taking the time! I absolutely love your children. They have been building on their knowledge of multiplication facts; learning about ocean zones; becoming more proficient in grammar (nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, article adjectives); studying life during post-civil war; and reading the story of Joshua. There are so many new topics in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade!

We are excited about our field trip to Mystic Aquarium at the end of October; please make sure you respond to the email to sign up.

The October book report genre will be historical figures biographies. The details will be in their binders today, Friday, October 6th.

Please practice multiplication facts with your children as often as you can. It can be a fun 5-minute game to play in the car or an app online. Mastering these facts will help them immensely.

Keep an eye out for "Lunch with Ms. Rennie" invitations. They will start on Monday, October 16<sup>th</sup>. I have lunch with one student every Monday until Christmas vacation. I can't wait to share a meal with your child!!

Thank you so much for your continued support.

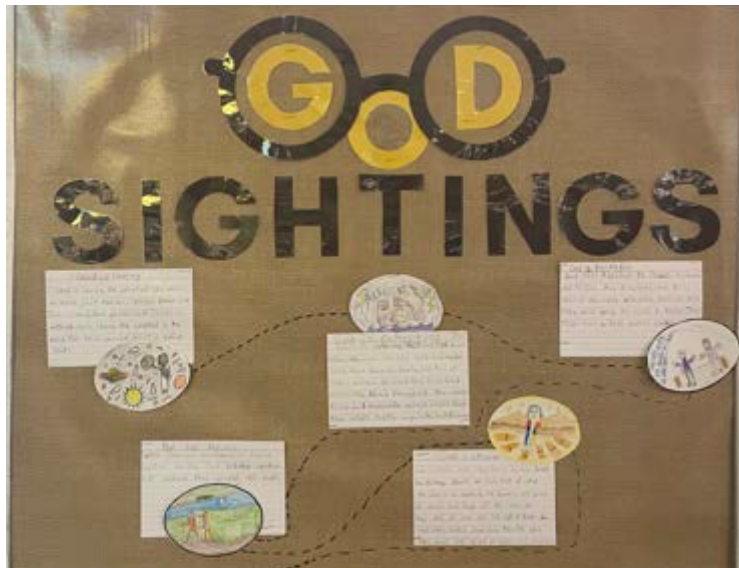
Blessings,  
Ms. Rennie



## A NOTE FROM MRS. VELARDE:

*Proverbs 5:1-2 says "Pay attention to wisdom; listen carefully to wise counsel. Then you will show discernment, and your lips will express what you've learned."* The lips of the 4<sup>th</sup> grade students have been busy expressing what they've learned so far this term. They have brought energy, excitement for learning, and a hunger for the Lord. Over the past month, the students have settled into 4<sup>th</sup> grade routines which include the economy system, the encouragement of more independence, and practicing self-advocating. We began the year by setting goals for ourselves and choosing Bible verses to help encourage us as we strive to meet them. Each student has one word that they are using as their guide for this academic year.

In Bible, we have recapped the Pentateuch and have begun the story of Joshua. As we discuss each story, the students have been coming up with "God Sightings". We are keeping them on a bulletin board in the classroom to remind us of who God is and what He has done. So far, we have discussed God's love for us, His protection, faithfulness, patience, creativity, and power. It has been a true joy to see their eagerness to learn more about who God is and what the Bible says about Him.



In History, we have picked up right where we left off last year – the end of the Civil War and how America in the 1860's and 1870's began to pick up the pieces and rebuild the Nation. In Science, we are learning about God as creator as we explore the depths of the oceans and the creatures and plant life He created to live way down there. In Math, we are reviewing material from last year while adding new skills to their prior knowledge. In LA, we are cruising through Shurley Grammar, reading literature while sipping tea and beginning our NaNoWriMo journey. So far, the students have begun brainstorming topics they would like to write about in their novels, and getting ready to "meet" their characters. As we move forward, we will continue to seek God's attributes throughout the Old Testament, increase our intrigue in the industrialization and urbanization of America, dive deeper into the ocean, master multiplication, classify more sentences, create characters and build worlds, and grow in love and understanding for each other. I am so excited to have the opportunity to reconnect with this group of students who were my first class at HCA when I taught 1<sup>st</sup> grade. We are off to a wonderful start and I can't wait to see where the Lord leads us this year!





# Middle School News!

## **Mrs. Nkrahene's News:**

Students have started their fifth grade year with an attitude of curiosity and a strong desire to understand God's Word. We are currently reading through Genesis. Students love to "popcorn" read, where one student reads a few verses and picks another student to continue. Our fifth graders ask interesting and sometimes hard questions. One student asked, "why are there multiple references in Genesis to 'animals that scurry along the ground'?" Another student asked, "why did God create human beings if He knew they'd sin?" Our morning devotions are filled with rich conversations and a shared fascination with the Word of God.

Our fifth grade classroom is also a space filled with joy and encouragement. Students are eager to help their teacher and each other. Students enjoy whole group discussions during break time, Food for Life, and Homeroom. They are always eager to share their thoughts and seem to enjoy their time in school.

It has been a significant time of transition for them. Fifth graders are new to middle school and are therefore learning new systems and rules, in addition to navigating changes to their academic workload. They have been trying hard to keep up but will need the support of parents at home. Thank you for all you have been doing to get them settled in. I am trusting the Lord for a great fifth grade year for all my students!

## **Mr. Shea's Shenanigans:**

Hello Team C parents!

The beginning of the school year has been a blast! I have enjoyed getting to know students in class and working with them to develop their writing and internet safety skills. Students have been working hard to learn about the parts of speech, create poetry that develops deep symbolism, and about all the things we can do to stay safe on the internet. As we continue on into the term I am looking forward to finishing up our first writing composition, a narrative poem using a favorite memory, and diving into our first class novel (Grade 5: *Wonder*, Grade 6: *The Rats of NIMH*). These stories focus on how we treat people that are different from us, and offer a strong connection to both the "Great Migration" being studied in History class and the book of Joshua in the Bible. On that note, I am short a couple of copies of *Wonder* for the fifth grade students. If you would like to take a field trip to the library to pick up a copy for your fifth grader, or lend a copy for student use, it would be greatly appreciated! Thank you so much for your continued support and partnership in teaching your students! God bless,  
Jeremiah Shea



## Mr. Curtis' Corner:

Welcome readers old and new to another season of Mr. Curtis' Corner, the show where we discuss all things seventh grade, and H.C.A. Middle School. It's hard to believe that we have been in school almost a month now. Middle School students are beginning to find their footing and finally admit summer has come and gone. Every new school year starts with an almost Jekyll and Hyde kind of struggle for students, as they want to embrace the new but are not willing to let go of the old. Thankfully, the vast majority of our students have finally relinquished the hold they had on summer times. Our Middle School team is so excited for a new year of learning, laughter and growth.

In History, we are in our second year of American history and have picked up right after the Civil War with the assassination of President Lincoln. Our students' have discovered some of the trickledown effect this major event had on the 'Reconstruction' period following the Civil War. Yes, the Civil War and slavery ended about one hundred and fifty years ago, but we continue to deal with the ramifications of such events all these years later. Recently, we have begun our journey out west with the 'Homestead Act' and the quest for new lives, jobs, and opportunities after the Civil War and with the end of slavery. There is just so much to unpack from American history this year and we are having a blast doing it.

In Bible, this year has started off with a wrap up of The Exodus and the great desert wandering. Sadly, we had to say goodbye to our beloved friend and leader of the Israelites, Moses. But his protégé Joshua seems to be filling his shoes just fine so far. God is teaching the nation of Israel hard lessons early on in the book of Joshua, but hopefully it's really Middle School Bible students who are really learning about God. We are all eagerly anticipating Spiritual Emphasis Week with Mr. Huffman starting in just 10 days. Please join us for a Middle School Chapel (8:45-9:30am daily) if you can, or join us in prayer that God would move in our Middle School during this time we have set apart to grow in our faith and community. Until next time....

Mr. Curtis

### Mrs. Gordon's Musings:

**Spiritual Development:** The adventure has begun! The start of the 8th grade year is unique in that it clearly marks the beginning of the end of our students' time at HCA. Devotions in our homeroom has been a sweet time together each morning. We are currently nearing the end of the *Jesus Storybook Bible* which provides a beautiful overview of the big story in Scripture. Spiritual Emphasis Week is around the corner (10/16-20), and I am excited to see all that God has for us during that time. The following week 8th grade students will have the opportunity to participate in a Leadership Conference on 10/24. In that space, we will reflect on the gifts and experiences God has provided them with as a group, and brainstorm how those can become a blessing to our student community.

**Health:** 7th and 8th grade students have weekly Health homework that aims to incorporate movement, good nutrition, and stress-reduction into their regular rhythms of life. Please support your students and engage them in conversation as they consider possible changes in these areas!

**Science:** 5th and 6th grade are wrapping up their first unit of the year which included introducing science (as opposed to nonscience, pseudoscience, and protoscience), Nature Journaling, and the scientific method. They will now begin their studies of Earth Science starting with our place in space. 7th and 8th grade have thought through some big and challenging questions related to the origin of the universe and life. I highly recommend checking out this resource if you too are interested in these things: [Beyond the Evolution vs. Creation Debate](#). Now they will carry on to a yearlong study of Biology starting, of course, with the incredible cell!

